

Well, that is pretty slick math. I just heard a reference to trigonometry. I do not know if you go into algebraic formulations, but it does not work. Trying to make it work has resulted in an apples-to-oranges claim.

I have been at this highway transit issue for about 40 years, since I started up here as a staff person. My predecessor was one of the five coauthors of the Interstate Highway Program and the Highway Trust Fund.

Not every State gets everything back that it puts into the Highway Trust Fund. The idea is that we are a mobile society. People travel from one coast to the other, from the North to the South, as the gentleman from Maryland just referenced a little bit ago, and the idea is we all help each other.

The problem with the Dear Colleague and with the claim of benefiting everybody is that it does not credit the States with any portion of the \$6.6 billion mega-project program, and that is not right. Mega-project funding will go to the States. We are not specifying which States, who will get it, how it goes out. That will be done under a distribution that will be made by a fair and equitable process to determine net regional and net national benefits from projects that unlock congestion knots in this country. So when you add the \$6 billion, every State gets more.

Now, who gets what? Under the highway funding of TEA LU, Florida gets \$751,632,870 more. Georgia gets \$450,800,700 more. Texas gets \$1,728,467,545 more. Every State gets more under TEA LU. Every State would get vastly more if we had this bill at the \$375 billion level which we introduced.

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The issue is not percentages; do not tinker around with that. Look at the net national benefits.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say, our national motto, *e pluribus unum*, "out of many, one," it is not *e pluribus pluribus*, "out of many, many." We are a Nation, an inclusive Nation. Those dollars that Georgia and Florida claim make them donor States come from States all along the eastern seaboard and from the Midwest. That is what we are about, one Nation, benefiting everybody. Vote for TEA LU, vote down Isakson.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my support for the Isakson amendment because it attempts to maintain the status quo for all the donor States by including earmarks and Projects of National and Regional Significance in the SCOPE of programs covered in the Minimum Guarantee program.

In TEA-21, 93 percent of the programs were included in the Minimum Guarantee, including the High Priority Projects. In TEA-LU, as written, the SCOPE is reduced to 84 percent of the programs. For Florida, that means \$860 million in lost guaranteed funds over 6 years. This would be a huge step backwards.

Mr. Chairman, it's simple math. H.R. 3550 keeps the equity guarantee at 90.5 percent, but reduces the coverage of the guarantee to

a smaller piece of the total pie. This will cause Florida and other States to lose hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Isakson amendment requires no additional funding. This amendment simply asks that we keep things the way they were in TEA-21. I urge my donor States colleagues to support this amendment, for the sake of their State.

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the amendments offered by my good friend Mr. ISAKSON to address the backwards slide in minimum guarantee that this transportation reauthorization bill would impose on a number of States—including my home State of Georgia.

Simply put, previous transportation bills have asked the hard-working folks in Northeast Georgia's 9th District to send more money to Washington . . . and see less money find its way back.

But this bill (H.R. 3550, TEA-LU), asks those same hard-working folks to send even more money to Washington . . . and see even fewer of their tax dollars make their way back to Northeast Georgia to improve the roads and conduct essential transportation improvements . . . and that's just as wrong as the day is long.

Consider the numbers. Under current law, every State is guaranteed a 90.5 percent return on each dollar of gas taxes it submits to the Federal government. And when the 1998 TEA-21 language became the law of the land, 93 percent of programs were included in the minimum guarantee, including high priority projects and projects of national and regional significance that are important to Georgians and others from States who pay so much more than ever comes back.

But under this bill, under TEA-LU, States' core funding programs would be decreased from a 90.5 percent share to only 84 percent of the programs. Don't forget, this includes "High Priority Projects and Projects of Regional Significance."

For the average State, this reduction in scope will result in the loss of \$300 million over the lifespan of the six-year legislation. In fact, the State of Georgia could stand to lose between \$500 and \$600 million.

Mr. Chairman, I have stood on this floor time and time again to preach the need for this Congress, and this Federal government, to exercise fiscal responsibility and live within our means—much like Georgians and all Americans do every single day. I also clearly recognize the need to meet this Nation's critical transportation infrastructure funding needs. Taking money from Peter to pay Paul, accomplishes neither objective . . . and in fact, only seriously jeopardizes the future infrastructure needs for millions of Americans.

Mr. Chairman, it is absolutely imperative to include high priority projects as well as projects of regional and national significance in the Scope formula for H.R. 3550. Make no mistake, we can do better . . . but by at least returning to a 90.5 percent minimum guarantee on 93 percent of the programs addressed in the Transportation Reauthorization Act, this Congress rights a major wrong contained in TEA-LU.

I urge my colleagues to do just that by supporting the Isakson amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). All time has expired.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

The question was taken; and the Chairman pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHAW) having assumed the chair, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Chairman pro tempore of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3550) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

MAKING IN ORDER BEFORE CONCLUSION OF AMENDMENTS PERIOD OF FURTHER GENERAL DEBATE IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE DURING FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3550, TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that during further consideration of H.R. 3550 in the Committee of the Whole, a period of further general debate contemplated in a previous order of the House of March 30, 2004, may be in order before the conclusion of the consideration of the bill for amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, is that the full extent of the agreement, just general debate on each side?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, yes, that is correct.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAW). Pursuant to House Resolution 593 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3550.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the